

We claim:

1. A method for detecting coliform and for detecting and confirming *E. coli* coliform in a sample comprising:

- a) contacting the sample with a medium comprising a growth encouraging medium in an amount effective to support coliform growth, at least one pH buffer so as to maintain a pH of at least 6.0, at least one coliform sensitive chromagen, and at least one coliform sensitive fluorogen, so as to allow any coliform present in the sample to access the medium;
- b) incubating the sample at a temperature above 37 degrees C for a time sufficient to allow coliform growth preferentially over non-coliform growth; and
- c) inspecting the sample for a signal.

2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the sample is incubated at a temperature of at least about 42 degrees C.

3. A method for detecting coliform in a sample comprising:

- a) contacting the sample with a medium comprising a growth encouraging medium in an amount effective to support coliform growth, at least one pH buffer so as to maintain a pH of 6.5 to 8, and at least one coliform sensitive fluorogen, so as to allow any coliform present in the sample to access the medium;
- b) incubating the sample at a temperature above 37 degrees C for a time sufficient to allow coliform growth preferentially over non-coliform growth; and
- c) inspecting the sample for a signal.

4. The method of Claim 3 wherein the sample is incubated at a temperature of at least 42 degrees C.

5. A method for detecting *E. coli* coliform in a sample comprising:

- a) contacting the sample with a medium comprising a growth encouraging medium in an amount effective to support *E. coli* coliform growth, at least one pH buffer so

as to maintain a pH of at least 6.0, at least one *E. coli* coliform sensitive chromagen, so as to allow any *E. coli* coliform present in the sample to access the medium;

- b) incubating the sample at a temperature at above 37 degrees C for a time sufficient to allow coliform growth preferentially over non-coliform growth; and
- c) inspecting the sample for a signal.

6. The method of Claim 5 wherein the sample is incubated at a temperature of at least 42 degrees C.

7. A device for detecting coliform and for detecting and confirming *E. coli* coliform comprising an absorbent material and a medium for detecting coliform and for detecting and confirming *E. coli* coliform adsorbed or placed onto the membrane, said medium comprising an antibiotic-free growth encouraging medium in an amount effective to support coliform growth, at least one pH buffer so as to maintain a pH of at least 6.0, at least one coliform sensitive chromagen, and at least one coliform sensitive fluorogen.

8. The device of Claim 7 wherein the medium also comprises an agent for increasing viscosity.

9. The device of Claim 8 wherein the viscosity agent is agar.

10. The device of Claim 7 wherein the medium elements are in a powdered form.

11. A device for detecting coliform and for detecting and confirming *E. coli* coliform comprising an antibiotic-free growth encouraging medium in an amount effective to support coliform growth, at least one pH buffer so as to maintain a pH of at least 6.0, at least one coliform sensitive chromagen, and at least one coliform sensitive fluorogen, all placed into a growth plate having a plurality of separate chambers.

12. The device of Claim 11 wherein the medium also comprises an agent for increasing viscosity.

13. The device of Claim 12 wherein the viscosity agent is agar.

14. The device of Claim 11 wherein the medium elements are in a powdered form.